

EVALUATION SUMMARY



Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Policy and Evaluation

Evaluation of the Jazz Ambassadors Program

This evaluation, the first of a major Cultural Exchange program at the U.S. Department of State, assesses the Jazz Ambassadors Program's effectiveness in fostering mutual understanding, serving as a mechanism of public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy, targeting and reaching key audiences, extending awareness of American cultural heritage, and offering unique opportunities for musical education and training.

Key Findings

Jazz Ambassadors Program activities engage a wide-range of audiences and extend the reach of traditional diplomacy.

- Activities help raise U.S. Embassies' public profiles, strengthen existing diplomatic relationships, re-ignite dormant relationships, and nurture new connections. More than 90% of Embassy staff agreed that Jazz Ambassadors Program activities are effective in extending the reach of traditional diplomacy and provide alternative venues for policy dialogue (89%).
- Nearly 90% of Embassy respondents believe that cultural exchange and performing arts programs, like the Jazz Ambassadors Program, are important in helping Embassies accomplish their missions.
- 87% agree that the Program helps Embassies reach constituents they ordinarily have a hard time reaching, especially young people and ethnic minorities, for whom music has a powerful appeal, Muslim populations, those in under-served locations, and the socio-economically disadvantaged.
- Almost 70% of concerts open to the public had audiences of 200 or more; the majority of official receptions included invitees of 100 or more. Local community events and events for ethnic and other minorities often drew audiences of 100 to 200 or more people.

Jazz Ambassadors Program activities change attitudes and promote American culture.

- 94% of Embassy staff, and 98% of musicians, reported the Program is effective in improving attitudes and beliefs about the American people.
- 95% of Embassy staff reported that the Program musicians establish a musical bond (artistic dialogue) with musicians and students in the countries they visit. Almost all of musicians (95%) agreed the audiences learn about American culture.
- In addition to aiding musicians and students in other countries, educational activities benefit Program musicians as well. Most (89%) indicated that the Program had an impact on their musical or artistic vision. Most (88%) also believed the Program has had an impact on how they perform and engage audiences.

Project Information: The U.S. Department of State contracted AMS Planning and Research Corp. and Philliber Research Associates to conduct this evaluation. They conducted site visits in Bulgaria, Honduras, India and Cameroon, from September 2004 to February 2005, as well as on-line surveys of U.S. Embassy staff responsible for managing the Jazz Ambassadors Program overseas. In addition, they administered on-line surveys to participating musicians and conducted in-depth phone interviews.

Program Information: During each of the past six years, the Jazz Ambassadors Program has sent seven to ten American jazz ensembles, on four- to six-week tours, to six targeted regions of the world. Each year, the Program highlights different aspects of jazz history and culture, through performances, as well as extensive educational and community outreach activities. Additional information on the newly renamed Jazz Ambassador Program (American Music Abroad) is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov>.

Contact Information: To request a copy of the full report, please contact the Office of Policy and Evaluation at (202) 632-6325 or ECAevaluation@state.gov. Summaries of other evaluations are available at <http://exchanges.state.gov/programevaluations>.

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